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# THE

# DEBT FORGIVEN.

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# THE DEBT FORGIVEN.

THERE was once an excellent king who ruled over a prosperous country, and governed his subjects with even-handed justice. A man who lived in that country, having borrowed a crore of rupees, foolishly squandered the whole amount, and defrauded his creditor. Suit was brought against him, and his guilt was clearly proved in the presence of the king. He saw that punishment was about to be inflicted upon him; but he could devise no means either of paying the debt, or of escaping from the approaching penalty.

At this juncture, the king's son, hearing of the matter, took pity upon the culprit, and coming into the royal presence spoke as follows: "Oh king! I accept this man's fault as my fault. I assume his debt as my debt. That he is guilty and richly deserves punishment, is true. Yet my heart melts with compassion for him. I will suffer what he ought to suffer. I will give what he ought to give. Selling my entire possessions, I will procure and bring to you the full amount of money he owes. This may distress me much. Possibly it may ruin me. But cost what it will, I am determined to save this man." Having thus become security for the condemned criminal, the king's son went, and, selling all that he had, brought the

money and laid it at the feet of the king.

Thereupon, the king turning to the debtor said: "Oh Criminal! If I should punish you, it would be only right. Nevertheless I am of one mind with my son. My earnest desire, like his, is that you should escape punishment and be happy. Consider well, therefore, the fault you have committed and realize its criminality. Admit that you richly merit punishment. Repent of your misdeeds and avoid such crimes in the future. Appreciate the kindness my son has done you. Trust him, and, henceforth, do as he bids you. If you agree to act in this way, I am ready to accept the money, proffered by my son, as an equivalent for your debt. Consent, and I will

at once pay your creditor, and release you without punishment.

To this the debtor replied: "Oh king! I sincerely acknowledge my fault. I am a great criminal, and it is but just, that thou shouldst punish me. Yet thy gracious words have filled me with joy, and I assent to them with all my heart. Never shall I forget the benefit thy son has conferred on me. Regarding him henceforth as my redeemer, I will ever trust in him, and ever obey his commands. Oh king! I do most humbly beg thee to pardon my crime for his sake." Hearing this, the king at once paid into the hands of the creditor the money furnished by his son, and, graciously pronouncing pardon, released the prisoner without punishment.

Manifestly this debtor could have no further cause for fear. His debt was paid, his pardon was proclaimed, and no punishment could fall upon him. It is but reasonable to think, that he would ever afterwards love and obey the prince, who so kindly paid his debt, and rescued him from suffering.

But let us vary the illustration a little. Let us suppose that the debtor, instead of assenting to the gracious proposal made by the king, had replied as follows: "Oh King! I have nothing to do with your son. I did not ask him to furnish the money for the payment of my debt. The transaction does not please me. I reject your proposal, and with it your advice that I should henceforth trust

in and obey your son." Now what, think you, would have been the result of such a rejoinder as this? Would it not have greatly angered the king? Would he not have exclaimed: "The obstinate, depraved wretch! Not only does he fail to see his fault and appreciate our kindness, but he openly scorns and rejects our gracious proposals of mercy. He richly deserves a double punishment"? And so saying, would he not at once have ordered the full penalty of the law to be executed upon him?

The foregoing may serve as an illustration of the mode in which God forgives sin.

The debtor was utterly incapable of paying his debt. So men

are utterly without power to remove their sins.

The debtor could devise no means of escaping the punishment about to fall upon him. So men can invent no way of escape from the punishment of hell which is due to their sins.

The king's son, taking pity on the debtor, came forward to redeem him from punishment. So the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, melting with compassion for sinners, came into the world to redeem them from hell.

The king's son assumed the fault of the debtor as his own fault. So Jesus Christ bore the sins of the men as if they had been his own sins.

Yet the king's son was entirely

without fault, the debtor alone being the criminal. So Jesus Christ was entirely free from sin, men alone being the sinners.

The king's son sold all his possessions and gave all his treasures for the debtor. So Jesus Christ gave not money indeed, but his very life for sinners.

To open a way for discharging the debtor's liabilities, the king's son voluntarily endured great sufferings, and sacrificed every thing that he possessed. So, to open a way of expiating men's sins, Jesus Christ underwent inexpressible agonies, and gave up his very life as an offering for them.

The king addressing the debtor said: "Oh Criminal! See what my son has done for you. He has

devised a way of paying your debt. Acknowledge therefore your fault and be sorry for it. For the future trust in my son and do as he bids you. If you agree to these terms, I will order your debt to be paid in the way he has devised, and will release you without punishment." In like manner, God addressing all men, says: "Oh sinners! See what my Son, Jesus Christ, has done for you. He has effected a way of removing your sins. Acknowledge therefore your faults, mourn over and renounce them for ever. Believe in my Son, Jesus Christ, love him with all your hearts, and walk henceforth according to his commands. If you agree to these terms, your sins shall be removed in the way opened by

him, and I will release you without punishment. Through faith in my son Jesus Christ, you shall escape from hell, and obtain eternal heaven."

Listen now to this gracious proposal of God; accept it believingly, and act in accordance with it. It is an assured fact, that Jesus Christ came to earth, suffered, gave up his life as a sacrifice for you, and rose again from the dead on the third day. By so doing, he made a full atonement for sin. Because he thus came and suffered, the way is opened for the removal of men's sins through him. There is no other way whatever. Had he not thus suffered, there could be no possibility either of escaping from hell or of reaching heaven. If, while

God still mercifully spares your lives, you repent of your sins, renounce all evil ways, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and obey his commands, your sins will be expiated through him. Through him you will escape from hell and reach eternal heaven.

If, on the other hand, you despise God's gracious proposals, eternal punishment will certainly come upon you. If, while God still spares your lives, you do not repent of your sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, your sins will never be removed. You will never enter the world of heaven, but will, at death, certainly fall into eternal hell.

You know not whether you will continue alive in this world

another day. Therefore make no delay. You must at once repent of your sins and renounce them. You must at once believe on Jesus Christ as your Saviour.

## JESUS PAID IT ALL.

Naught of merit, or of price,
Remains to justice due;
Jesus died and paid it all,
Yes, all the debt I owe.

When He from his lofty throne
Stoop'd down to do and die,
Every thing was fully done;
'Tis finished! was his cry.

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